Teaching *Ladri di biciclette.*
Maps and Network

Robert Gordon

Italian teachers day, Selwyn College, Cambridge
6 May 2017
Vittorio de Sica
Ladri di biciclette

Course Material

DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN
PART 1A
PAPER It1/ItA3: Texts and Contexts
Bicycle Thieves and Neorealism:

E.g. Christopher Wagstaff,  
*Italian Neorealist Cinema. An Aesthetic Approach*  
(Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2007)
Postwar:

André Bazin,


"nothing happens"
André Bazin,


"nothing happens […] that might just as well not have happened"
Thick description:

Geertz, Clifford,
in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 3-30
1. MAPS
Geography and Literature

Franco Moretti,  
*The Atlas of the European Novel*  
(London Verso, 1998)
Map of Rome, 1950

Key Locations
1. Val Melaina (the Riccis’ home)
2. Piazza Sempione (Bruno’s workplace)
3. Via Montecatini (the poster warehouse)
4. Via della Paglia (La Santona’s)
5. Via Pinciana (Antonio’s lesson in bill-posting)
6. Via Francesco Crispi, near Largo Tritone (the theft)
7. Piazza Vittorio (market)
8. Porta Portese (market and surrounding area)
9. Church of Saints Nereo e Achille (the Mass for the poor)
10. Via di Panico (the brothel)
11. Vicolo della Campanella (the thief’s home)
12. Stadio Nazionale (the final scene)

Hidden Monuments
A. Pantheon
B. Trevi Fountain
C. Spanish Steps
D. Castel Sant’Angelo
E. Coliseum
F. Vittoriano Monument and Capitoline Hill (glimpsed from Meniconi’s lorry)

Key Arteries
i. Via Nomentana, starting at Porta Pia
ii. Via Nazionale
iii-vi. Key sites along the River Tiber seen in the film
Map of Rome, 1950 (Centre)

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Entering the City:

2. NETWORKS
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MASS, CROWD

STREET, PIAZZA QUARTIERE

FAMILY PARTY CHURCH

WORK, LEISURE

housewives
bill posters
dustmen
marketeers
policemen
unionists
officials
pawnbrokers
petrol pump atts
labourers
thieves
urchins
priests, seers
prostitutes
volunteers
Journalist
bike park atts

sport
sex
play
food
music
film
The modern epic:

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